

## REMARKS

Claims 1-10 are pending in the application. Claims 1-10 are rejected.

In the Office Action the drawings are objected to for not showing the "third storage." In addition under U.S.C 112, second paragraph, claims 5, 6 and 7 are rejected for reciting the "third storage area"

It is respectfully submitted that the third storage is supported by both the drawings and specification. For example, in the drawings Fig. 7 shows the switch data table which is described in the specification, for example, on page 16, line 17 to page 17, line 15.

Claim 5 particularly recites that the third storage means stores "a list of the switches being available in the network system, in association with a list of the logical groups that can be assigned to the terminals belonging to each switch's local terminal group." The wording "list of the logical groups" refers to the rightmost field of the table (Fig. 7), entitled "SUPPORTED VLAN." This field limits the VLAN connectivity of each switch. The server will not allow a switch to accept a terminal whose VLAN domain (logical group) is not supported by that switch.

In view of the foregoing it is respectfully submitted that the objection to the drawings and rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, should be withdrawn since the third storage means is described in the specification and shown in the drawings.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Tanimoto (U.S. 6,075,776). Tanimoto relates to a VLAN system and a VLAN management server connected a global network. The system manages packet transmission and the location of each terminal is referenced to a management table indicating a corresponding relationship between

each terminal and a remote access server and indicates a location of each terminal under connection.

In contrast to the cited reference applicant's claims 1, 9 and 10 include features not described nor suggested in the prior art, including: suggesting a specific logical group to which said source terminal in question is supposed to belong, based on the identifier of the source terminal, when said searching means has failed to provide the requested information.

In the prior Office Action applicant's claim 3 was rejected arguing that, in the Tanimoto reference, if the MAC address of TE 101 has been registered in the initial information management table 50, IMS 700 returns a packet indicating that the TE has been authenticated and also returns the IP address of RAS 301 of HNW 20.

However applicant's claims 1, 9 and 10 recite exactly the opposite of the cited reference. The previous claim 3 recites when said searching means has failed to provide the requested information. In other words previous claim 3 recites what the server would do if the identifier (specifically the MAC address) of the terminal in question has not been registered.

Claims 1, 9 and 10 recite that the server suggests a specific logical group to which the source terminal in question is supposed to belong, based on the identifier of the source terminal, when the searching means has failed to provide the requested information (i.e., information about the logical group membership of a particular source terminal).

Applicant's claim 5 recites a "third storage means for storing a list of the switches being available in the network system, in association with a list of the logical groups that can be assigned to the terminals belonging to each switch's local terminal group."

The prior art references fail to suggest the claimed third storage means. The claimed third storage means refers to a list of VLANs that each switch is allowed to support, which is shown as "SUPPORTED VLAN" in Fig. 7.

In the Office Action claim 3 was rejected on the basis of Tanimoto: "if the MAC address of TE 101 is not registered in initial information management table 50, IMS 700 returns a packet indicating that the TE was unauthenticated to RAC 601." Thus Tanimoto teaches that the initial information management table 50 (Fig. 2) of IMC 700 contains a list of MAC address of TEs.

This is completely different from applicant's claimed third storage means storing a list of the switches being available in the network system, in association with a list of the logical groups that can be assigned to the terminals belonging to each switch's local terminal group. Whereas Tanimoto teaches a list of MAC address of TEs.

In addition, although not mentioned in the Office Action, Tanimoto discloses another table in IMS 700, the location information management table 30 as shown in Fig. 3. However, this table 30 is also irrelevant to claim 5 since it contains the address of RAS or RAC associated with each TE, only indicating to which subnetwork each particular TE is currently connected.

For at least the foregoing reasons it is respectfully submitted applicant's claims 1, 3, 5, 8-10 are patentably distinguished from the Tanimoto reference and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) claims 2, 4, 6 and 7 are each rejected by Tanimoto and a further reference. It is respectfully submitted none of the further references suggests the features missing from the Tanimoto reference and therefore such a combination of references fail to teach or render obvious each and every feature of applicant's claims. In addition applicant claims a

unique combination of features that are not suggested in any of the references nor the combination of references. Thus the rejection should be withdrawn.

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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